

ILLEGIB

October 7, 1970

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S NOTE

SUBJECT: The President's Board, 1956-60

In the Summer 1969 issue of "Studies in Intelligence," there appeared an article entitled "The President's Board: 1956-60" (sub-title: "Overseeing the Intelligence Community"). In the remote event that members have a few spare moments during the present meetings, they may wish to glance through the article, which is appended, to find out what the writer considers the Board's history, objectives, and accomplishments were during that period.

"Studies in Intelligence" is a quarterly publication by CIA (classified SECRET-NOFORN) in which members of the Intelligence Community present articles "on any theoretical, doctrinal, operational, or historical aspect of intelligence."

NRO review(s) completed.

On Agenda Bd meeting Oct 8-9, 1970
Approved For Release 2004/06/29 : CIA-RDP89B00980R000400120002-6

*Overseeing the intelligence
community.*

THE PRESIDENT'S BOARD: 1956-60

Philip K. Edwards

At the beginning of 1956, in part at least as an alternative to the proposals for a congressional watchdog committee that had been so vigorously debated during the preceding year, President Eisenhower appointed a Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities to help him oversee the work of the intelligence community and especially the CIA. Composed of men both competent and nationally prominent, the PBCFIA—no *pro forma* institution—kept intelligence activities under lively scrutiny for the remainder of the Eisenhower administration. Its critiques and recommendations were the prime mover in many of the important new developments of the period, for example the creation of the USIB and the establishment of the community's remarkably fast system for "critical" communications; and they helped shape many others, such as the accomplishments in advanced reconnaissance which were to achieve a breakthrough in data on the Soviet strategic posture.

Formation and Functioning

After General James H. Doolittle had completed his investigation of the Agency in October 1954, J. Patrick Coyne of the National Security Council staff had suggested that the Doolittle committee be formalized as a permanent advisory body to the President; and in the following February Lyman Kirkpatrick (who as the Agency's IG had been "case officer" for that committee) recommended to Allen Dulles in writing that CIA take the initiative on this suggestion, formulating the charter for a President's Board, nominating the members, and preparing a presidential announcement. Then in June the Hoover Commission, in endorsing the Mark Clark task force report on federal intelligence activities, likewise recommended that such a committee be formed. It was not until November 1955, however, that Dulles sent a memorandum to the President referring to Senator Mansfield's proposal for a congressional watchdog committee, explaining that he had not expressed opposition to it only because that would have been tactically unwise, urging that a board of about seven consultants

SECRET

113

SECRET

The President's Board

be named before the Mansfield bill came up, and suggesting ten names from which to choose. After another two months spent chiefly in lining up the membership, the President created the PBCFIA by Executive Order 10656, effective 13 January 1956.

The Board's first chairman was James R. Killian, and the list of members included such well-known names as Robert A. Lovett, Benjamin F. Fairless, General Doolittle, Admiral Richard L. Conolly (who had been a member of the Clark Task Force), and Joseph P. Kennedy.¹ When early in 1958 Dr. Killian was named Science Advisor to the President he relinquished the chairmanship to General John E. Hull but remained on the Board. Staff Director for the Board was first Brigadier General John F. Cassidy and from 20 July 1959 on "Pat" Coyne, detailed from the NSC. In CIA the Inspector General was designated the normal channel for contacts with the Board, and Kirkpatrick established close working relationships with Cassidy and then Coyne.

Board members had been warned prior to their appointment that they would be expected to meet for several days not less often than twice a year, but in practice they worked much harder than that requirement implied. They met somewhat more often than that, and in between meetings they traveled, singly and in groups, all over the world inspecting intelligence operations. Beginning on 2 April 1956 they were briefed at great length on all aspects of intelligence activities. They required the submission of detailed semiannual reports from each intelligence agency. They themselves reported in writing to the President at least annually, and they made a total of 37 major recommendations for improvements in the community. They followed through to see that these recommendations were acted on and that the President should know about it if they weren't.

Although, as is to be expected of any high-level, part-time advisory body, the Board's conclusions occasionally suffered from insufficient intimacy with operations—they found a big problem, for example, where there hardly was one, in coordinating USIA's unattributed (but

¹ Other original members were General Hull and Edward L. Ryerson. Later in the year C. W. Darden and David K. E. Bruce were appointed. Kennedy had resigned, officially because his son was campaigning for office; but he had in fact not felt comfortable in the work, not having had much experience with intelligence. In subsequent years resignations were tendered by Bruce, Fairless, and Killian. The last was replaced by William O. Baker.

SECRET

The President's Board

SECRET

not unattributable) propaganda with that of CIA—the recommendations were by and large realistic and discerning, and the efforts required to meet them were well spent. Certainly they concentrated on the crux of the intelligence mission—early warning, plans for wartime operations, data on Soviet missiles—and the means to these ends—signals intelligence, communications, advanced reconnaissance, and an integrated intelligence effort under a strong DCI. Only secondarily were they concerned with effecting economies by reducing duplicate activities. With respect to clandestine operations the Board's work was less productive, but it did improve the coordination of covert action programs and lent the weight of its approval to some measures undertaken by the Agency.

War and Warning

Two of the Board's first set of recommendations, submitted in December 1956, had to do with planning for wartime. One of these, asking for plans to assure the "proper functioning" of the (headquarters) intelligence community in wartime, a difficult problem because of shifting assumptions about wartime conditions and plans for continuity of command, was eventually assigned as the responsibility of a USIB committee on "emergency planning" considering a whole spectrum of types of emergency, and no further action on it was separately reported to the Board. The other, however, urging that planning for wartime activities in the field be brought "to the highest readiness" and that realistic war-gaming with the military forces be begun, required semiannual reports recounting in detail these plans for all theaters and especially the results of war-gaming and progress in correcting revealed deficiencies. Joint CIA-JCS reports were in fact submitted every six months until 1960, when it was agreed they might be made annually in the future.

The Board's persistence in seeing that measures it recommended were carried out is better illustrated in those designed to improve early warning capabilities. The President's concern about the danger of surprise attack, evidenced at the summit conference in 1955, had not been allayed; Jerome Wiesner's "Warning and Defense in the Missile Age" had pointed up the problem; an IAC subcommittee was studying it, and a recent National Estimate had not been optimistic. The matter was under consideration in the Board's meeting of 28 September 1957, but the launching of Sputnik I the following week must have contributed urgency to the language of the recommendation

SECRET

115

SECRET

The President's Board

made on 24 October, that under the personal direction of the DCI and with the highest priority, the total resources available to the intelligence community be concentrated on processing and communicating prior warning of Soviet attack. Another recommendation of the same date, that the IAC be merged with the US Communications Intelligence Board, singled out the National Indications Center as a particular concern of the proposed USIB. The text of the report to the President which conveyed these recommendations apparently mentioned also the need for a survey of the whole strategic warning mechanism centered on the NIC and the Watch Committee.

To the Board's next meeting, at the end of February 1958, it could be reported that the Secretary of Defense had been designated executive agent for providing a worldwide network for critical communications, that processing and relay procedures were being worked out (the CRITIC system) with the aim of getting warning messages from originator to action desk in speeds approaching ten minutes (as against the 1 to 40 hours, plus up to 5 hours shuttling around Washington, that a sampling the previous fall had shown top priority messages to be delayed), and that relay stations in the NSA network, which would form the core of the communications net, were being automated. In May a progress report noted that Defense was working on the new communications system, and in July the CRITIC procedures were put into effect.²

There were already signs of Board and White House impatience for more rapid progress, however. In June, when Deputy Secretary of Defense Quarles had requested a second postponement for a joint progress report (with CIA) on the system, he received a curt note from Robert Cutler, presidential assistant for national security affairs, to the effect that the President would be informed of this "further deferral" and that the report would be expected by 15 August. In its next set of recommendations, in October 1958, the Board asked that work be intensified on measures for improvement without waiting for the over-all study being made of the communications system; and the NSC, passing this recommendation on to the DCI, specified that a system of tests of the CRITIC system be set up. The tests, as reported to the Board in its April 1959 meeting, showed message times greatly reduced, to an average on the order of an hour, but the goal of ten minutes could not be approached, the DCI stressed in a memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, until Defense had developed the pro-

² See *Studies IV 2*, p. 19.

SECRET

The President's Board

SECRET

posed new communications system. In May, William O. Baker, who had headed a panel set up to help improve NSA operations, told Kilian that the network Defense was trying to use was "fragmentary, uneconomic, and dangerous."

At the Board's next meeting, in July 1959, General Hull insisted that CRITIC performance be improved without waiting for new equipment to be installed in the network; and out of this meeting came recommendations devoted exclusively to critical communications—that the existing system be reorganized in a way compatible with the ultimate global network, that this be done under guidance of the Secretary of Defense, that there be frequent tests, and that procedures be improved. In December, in a report to the President that Dulles ruefully called "tough," the Board drew attention to its longstanding request for a full survey of the strategic warning mechanism and recommended that the DCI complete this, prepare specific indicator lists to supplement that covering general indicators, and bring the Watch Committee and the NIC to maximum efficiency.

The strategic warning survey was still only about one-third done when the Board went out of existence with the change in administration in January 1961, but the drive for speedy communications had produced impressive results. Throughout the government-controlled bulk of the network the lag for CRITIC messages was in fact approaching an average ten minutes, and it was only from places where commercial communications still had to be used that it had to be measured in hours.

Soviet Missiles

The putative missile gap that was a matter of genuine concern during these years and until after the Board had been disbanded was reflected in all its deliberations after Sputnik I and particularly in its attention to two collection systems, Comint-Elint and advanced reconnaissance, which spearheaded the attack on not only the warning problem but also that of missile characteristics and deployment. (The President himself was apparently more concerned in December 1958 with warning: in grumbling that people always tell him this or that reconnaissance project won't give itself away and then a lot of the balloons come down in the USSR and all the manned overflights are detected, he remarked that the U-2 didn't seem to be much good for

SECRET

117

SECRET

The President's Board

warning anyway; you have to have live agents in the right place for that. But a month later we find him getting briefed personally on all the latest photographic take.)

Both of these systems were on the agenda for Allen Dulles to talk to Killian about the day before the Board met with the President to make its first recommendations; in December 1956 "the Bissell project" or "Aquatone" had been operational for less than a year, and Killian's advice was to be sought. It was not until the next year, however, that Richard Bissell, along with Arthur Lundahl, whose Photo Interpretation Center was processing the take, gave the full Board a briefing at its September meeting. The Board also discussed the earth satellite program, which seemed less promising than manned vehicles for reconnaissance because satellites could not be put just where you wanted them. Its recommendation, issued in October, was that advanced reconnaissance be given "adequate consideration and handling," but more broadly that the primary efforts of intelligence be devoted to the Soviet missile program and to getting the "hard facts" on the Soviet strategic air arm.

The U-2 program was apparently kept under considerable presidential restraint, at least until shortly before it was blown by the Powers shoot-down, although by then the missile gap had become a hot political issue. Meeting in April 1958, the Board noted the stand-down of Aquatone because of current international tension; and on 1 March 1960, Dulles suggested in writing to the NSC that the cardinal objective of information on Soviet missile deployment could be better achieved if the U-2 were given freer rein. This latter was counter to the Board's recommendation in the preceding December—another of the few unrealistic tangents it went off on—that the Priority National Intelligence Objectives be revised to call for national intelligence (rather than things of departmental interest, such as order of battle), a recommendation presented just after the PNIOs had been revised and with the oral comment that there should be only one national object of any considerable priority—Soviet missile deployment.

With respect to the development of reconnaissance by earth satellite there seems to have been little to report for a year and a half except the spending of \$7 million on intelligence aspects of the satellite program as of 21 May 1958, but in March 1959 a progress report was submitted by the Defense Department's Advanced Research Projects Agency: the USIB agencies were represented on a working panel

SECRET

The President's Board

SECRET

for space surveillance; in January, Defense and NASA had signed an agreement for mutual support; an interim National Space Surveillance Coordinating Center was in operation pending the readiness of a permanent one, expected by July 1960; for ten months a satellite detection "fence" had been carrying on experimental operations to find "dark" objects in space; the Jet Propulsion Laboratory was analyzing tracking problems. Later that month the USIB took over from ARPA the direction of the panel on intelligence requirements and capabilities in space surveillance and an ad hoc Satellite Requirements Committee.

By the spring of 1960 the prospects for SAMOS satellites were sufficiently encouraging that Robert Amory, the DD/I, recommended to Dulles (two days before the Powers shoot-down) that he present to the Board, as one of three fundamental issues for intelligence for the next decade, the proposition that reconnaissance by satellite should be made wholly overt and its legitimacy established as a matter of international law.³ During its May 1960 meeting the Board spent one afternoon in CIA's Photo Interpretation Center, and in September both the developments with respect to SAMOS and a review of the U-2 program were on the agenda of its next-to-last meeting.

In response to the Board's broader call for primary attention to the Soviet missile program, an ad hoc subcommittee of the IAC was formed under the chairmanship of Herbert Scoville, Assistant Director for Scientific Intelligence, to consider the problem, and early in February 1958, Scoville offered the IAC alternative charters for a subcommittee on Guided Missile Collection Activities (which he himself advocated) and one on Collection Activities generally, which the ad hoc committee had proffered.⁴ In the meantime, however, the USCIB had apparently also taken up the question. On 26 February it tabled in a joint IAC-USCIB meeting the draft charter for a Critical Collection Problems Committee, and this was approved. The CCPC then became the instrument for focusing collection efforts on missile intelligence with a priority symbolized by putting the Deputy DCI in its

³ Amory's other two propositions have fared better; they were that military intelligence should be unified and that a national photo interpretation center should be set up.

⁴ This was no new project for Scoville; almost a year earlier he had proposed to Lucian Truscott, the DCI's new Deputy for Coordination, that a committee be established to coordinate scientific and technical collection activities.

SECRET

119

SECRET

The President's Board

chair. It was reported to the Board on 28 February that the Committee was already overseeing two projects, and a progress report of 21 May identifies two, presumably the same two, as acoustic intelligence and one concerned with the airfields of the Soviet Long Range Air Force. The Board seems never to have given any further special attention to the activities of the CCPC unless one of its very last recommendations, in October 1960, that SAC renew the peripheral collection of Elint, would have been a concern of the Committee.

The NSA

Elint-Comint was in any case the other major collection system contributing to early warning and missile intelligence, and it needed attention. In 1956, Elint activities were scattered among several agencies while Comint was shared by NSA, reporting to the Defense Department's Office of Special Operations, with the intercept agencies of the individual services. In December Allen Dulles told Killian that the NSA problem was the most serious in the community; he hoped that the Board's attention to it would maintain the impetus toward a solution that had been given by the recent appointment of General John A. Samford as NSA director. Judging by the recommendations the Board made that month, the NSA problem had two aspects—the difficulty of breaking the best Soviet ciphers, and how to make a fruitful selection from the mass of intercept traffic available—along, perhaps, with some more general managerial difficulties.

Besides a probably mistaken recommendation that Comint be put under an Assistant Secretary of Defense, presumably in order that it have more high-level attention,⁵ the Board's proposals were, first, that the President himself lend his prestige to a recruitment drive for cryptanalysts to work on Soviet ciphers and, second, that Defense make a strong effort to develop better machines and techniques for NSA to use in selecting intercepts. Gordon Gray's Office of Defense Mobilization, however, under whose auspices the Board had suggested the recruitment drive might be mounted, recommended in April 1957 that a panel of ten under William O. Baker first study the problem; and the President approved this recommendation, asking for a report by 1 September.

⁵This was successfully opposed by Defense, with CIA concurrence. It was argued that NSA got more attention in the Secretary's office by being under Special Operations.

SECRET

The report of the Baker panel, of which a draft began to circulate in September and was commented on by CIA only the following January, recommended among other things that a research institute be founded to study Soviet ciphers, that measures be taken to speed up the communications network for warning purposes, and that NSA take jurisdiction over Elint also. At its meeting of 28 February 1958 the Board noted that the Baker report was being implemented, and in the following April it received a DCI report on the progress of the implementation; but it was not until the end of July that State and Defense concurred in giving Elint to NSA.

The Board continued throughout its existence to give particular attention to NSA. In October 1958 one of its formal recommendations called for strong leadership on the part of the Agency's director; at its April and July meetings in 1959 it heard reports on the "noticeable progress" Samford was making; and in December 1959 it recommended that collection requirements levied on NSA be channeled through OSO for review and guidance. The DCI took strong exception to this last recommendation, even after it was explained that it referred only to the requirements of the military services, saying that the regulation of requirements was a matter for USIB, where all the military agencies concerned were represented, and the OSO should stick to management. In the NSC's follow-through on the recommendation, it was generalized to refer to the implementation of Comint-Elint fusion, and the NSC required joint DCI-Defense progress reports on 8 March and 15 June 1960 and annual reports on 1 May thereafter.

In May 1960, after Samford had left the NSA, the Board pointedly recommended more continuity in the directorship. And in December 1960, finally, it showed its concern over the Martin-Mitchell defection by recommending an investigation by an outside agency, preferably the FBI, and by proposing that the Secretary of Defense be given the same kind of authority over personnel in security matters as the DCI has.

Strong Central Direction: the DCI

One of the main themes that ran through all the Board's thinking was expressed in the very first of its first set of recommendations, that the DCI should "exercise a more comprehensive and positive coordinating responsibility" and move the community's effort "in the direction of integration, reduction of duplication, and coordination." Inte-

SECRET

121

SECRET

The President's Board

gration under strong centralized direction, another recommendation declared, should strengthen the intelligence effort and contain its costs. In part to achieve this purpose, a third called for the revision of the NSCIDs. And a fourth proposed, in order to free the DCI to exert this central leadership, that he turn over day-to-day detail to a chief of staff or executive director.

Almost every subsequent meeting of the Board produced further needling along these lines. It met with some response, certainly, but that the Board was dissatisfied with how much is evident in the foremost of its final recommendations, submitted in October 1960. In an almost exasperated tone it recommended that the DCI say, first, what legislative or executive action was needed to centralize the direction of intelligence activities and, second, whether the DCI should also head an agency operating in competition with other intelligence agencies. Dulles replied in effect "None" to the first and "Yes" to the second. It was his disposition to lead by persuasion rather than command, and he believed that strong central direction of the traditionally competitive agencies of the community could be achieved only gradually.

In the matter of appointing a chief of staff, in particular, he felt strongly that no one should stand between him and his deputies in the functional directorates. He proposed in February 1957 to meet the Board's purposes by creating a new deputy for coordination, a position for which Lucian Truscott would be available, with no other duties than to exercise that function of the DCI's, and at the Board's next fall meeting he defended this proposal, said that he was also expanding the duties of his executive assistant, John Earman, to those of an executive officer, and suggested that an exchange of letters with the President, perhaps made public, on the DCI's coordination responsibility would help to emphasize it. No action was taken on the latter suggestion, but the President approved the new Deputy position in May 1957.

This compromise arrangement the Board found, after a trial period, to be inadequate, and in October 1958 it again recommended the creation of an executive director. The NSC, however, presumably on Dulles' urging,⁶ amended this proposal in passing it on and offered

⁶He is recorded during the following December as having expressed to Robert Lovett of the Board his continued opposition to the recommendation.

The President's Board

SECRET

as an alternative the expansion of the Inspector General's responsibilities. The latter was reported to the Board's next meeting as having been accomplished.

Directives and Coordination

Another centralizing measure that was resisted the Board pushed through with greater determination—the consolidation of the USCIB and IAC as a single USIB. It made this recommendation in October 1957, but three months later Dulles, reporting to the NSC that the service intelligence agencies were opposed, suggested that any such action be deferred. The NSC referred this response to the Board for consideration; the Board reiterated its recommendation. On 14 March 1958 the President flatly directed compliance, and six months later the USIB held its first meeting.

This consolidation required a rewriting of NSCID 1, but the NSCIDs were already in the process of revision as a result of the Board's first set of recommendations at the end of 1956. In September 1957 it had been reported that only numbers 5 and 9 were still giving trouble. No. 9, concerning Comint, touched on delicate questions with respect to the exclusiveness of the NSA charter (cannot CIA continue to do its own processing of plain-text intercepts picked up in clandestine operations? Could not some hard-to-cover NSA stations be eliminated if one took advantage of CIA liaison with friendly foreign services to get their Comint?) and whether the DCI should have membership in the State-Defense Special Committee to which the USCIB was supposed to report. Now with the unified USIB the Special Committee was eliminated altogether and the other questions presumably became easier to solve.

By October 1958, at any rate, the directives issue was one of implementing the new NSCIDs by issuing DCIDs. Here the persistent sticker became aspects of clandestine coordination not settled in NSCID 5—FBI contacts with foreign intelligence services and, more seriously, "agreed activities" in clandestine collection on the part of the military services. The Board was well aware of the latter problem, especially in its acute manifestation with respect to clandestine Army activities in Berlin; several members had brought back their own impressions from inspection on the spot. What the Army wanted was a license to explore operational possibilities up to a point without prior coordination. When the DCID was finally issued in December 1959,

SECRET

123

SECRET

The President's Board

almost simultaneously with another needling recommendation from the Board, it withheld any such license; but it did not lay the issue to rest. The military elements in Berlin, where most of the trouble was, were prepared to follow the directive in good faith, but their superiors in West Germany were not.

Another kind of coordination was involved in an innovation apparently pushed through by the Board's staff man, General Cassidy, and Kirkpatrick in CIA acting in concert—coordination in producing finished current intelligence. In January 1957, evidently seeking some accounting for the surprise we suffered in the British-French-Israeli attack on Suez, the Board asked for copies of all the community's current intelligence dailies for 24 October 1956 (and all weeklies for that week and monthlies for that month). In reviewing this material Cassidy found flaws in current intelligence operations—no community-coordinated product, inadequate coordination of collection requirements, bad telephone security—and in March he brought these to the attention of the DCI. Kirkpatrick, recalling how two years earlier his inspectors had recommended that the Agency's current intelligence product be coordinated to obtain the concurrence of other members of the community and that it be tailored more sharply to the needs of the President and the NSC, now recommended to Dulles that the Cassidy suggestions be acted on in this sense.

The matter was taken up at all the IAC meetings during April 1957 and a reply to Cassidy formulated, which Dulles forwarded on 1 May. It brushed off any idea of drastic change: there would be more consultation with other agencies in the course of producing the Agency's daily, and dissemination was being reviewed. In July Cassidy was reported annoyed at the failure to institute production of current intelligence endorsed by all agencies, and in September Kirkpatrick again called Dulles' attention to deficiencies in the Agency product and recommended that Truscott prepare a plan for the production and dissemination of coordinated, community-wide current intelligence. This time it worked: in November the dry run of a new, coordinated daily to be renamed Central (instead of Current) Intelligence Bulletin was being reviewed.

Costs and Duplication

A secondary benefit the Board expected to derive from a better integrated and coordinated intelligence community was the containment of costs through reduction of duplication. (This objective may

- have held a higher priority with the President himself than it seemed to with his Board; Eisenhower was reported shocked to learn that intelligence agencies were spending a billion dollars a year and desirous that they economize.) No action, however, was reported taken in specific response to this suggestion in the Board's first recommendations. In September 1957 Killian suggested to Cutler, not as a formal recommendation of the Board, that the IAC's annual report on the status of the foreign intelligence program would be better as a DCI report which included figures on the budget and personnel for the whole government intelligence program; and this suggestion was apparently the nucleus of the cost-control attempts that began a year later.

In April 1959, it was reported to the Board that in response to one of its recommendations of the preceding October, to the effect that the DCI should search out and eliminate areas of unnecessary duplication, a community-wide budget was being worked on (and CIA manpower being reduced). Since July 1958 an ad hoc working group had been studying the problem, and in June 1959 the CIA Comptroller submitted to the USIB a procedure for uniform cost estimating and a USIB Cost Estimates Committee was formed. No further progress in this matter, however, seems ever to have been reported separately to the Board.⁷

- Perhaps realizing that the approach through the budget held no promise of early reductions in duplication, the Board also made a more specific attack on this problem which was evidently of concern to the President. Just before Christmas 1959 it asked the USIB for an inventory of all intelligence periodicals published in the community; and when it had received and studied this it recommended, in May 1960, that the duplication among them, especially those issued by Defense agencies, be eliminated. In early October it reissued this recommendation without making special reference to Defense.

About this time Gordon Gray, who had now become the President's assistant for national security affairs, wrote to the Board that the President wanted more accomplished in reducing duplication and hoped the Joint Study Group, which had been formed in July,⁸ would

⁷ That progress with respect to some of the recommendations was not reported to the Board does not necessarily mean that none was reported to the NSC.

⁸ As a compromise when the Bureau of the Budget proposed a survey of intelligence activities which the Board felt would encroach on its own functions.

SECRET

125

SECRET

The President's Board

be effective therein. At the end of October the NSC asked the DCI for a progress report by 6 January 1961 and then for another by 1 June. At last report to the Board, however, the USIB Ad Hoc Committee on Intelligence Publications, which had been formed to make the inventory and extended to study action on the recommendation, was still working with the objective of reducing the number of intelligence dailies from 13 to 1.

Covert Action

The Board was uneasy about the Clandestine Services' non-intelligence activities. One of its first recommendations, in December 1956, was that procedures be set up to insure that projects under NSC 5412 get "joint staffing"⁹ and formal approval in advance and that State and Defense be kept abreast of their implementation within the principle of need to know. The rules drafted in response to this recommendation and approved in March 1957 provided that a Special Group consisting of the Under Secretary of State (Herter), Deputy Secretary of Defense (Robertson), and the President's national security assistant (Cutler) would be the policy authority¹⁰ and would in each case decide whether it was necessary to have an ad hoc staff-level group examine the proposal in detail, except that sensitive projects with no military implications might, with the President's permission, be approved by the Secretary of State alone.

It was reported to the Board in September 1957 that the Special Group was holding meetings, but it apparently remained less than fully active. In October 1958, perhaps because of trouble with the operations in Indonesia that had been discussed at its meeting the previous spring, the Board issued three recommendations designed to restrict freedom of covert action. One insisted that the Special Group review all clandestine programs. It was pointed out that the President assumed it had been reviewing them; he directed that they be "staffed" in advance, reviewed while in progress, and analyzed on conclusion.

⁹ This phrase caused a good deal of confusion until it was explained to mean, not the planning and direction of the operations by an interagency staff, but a detailed (i.e., staff-level) joint examination before policy approval.

¹⁰ Such a group had always, with some variation in detail, been the *pro forma* authority under 5412; under this pressure from the Board it was to become more active now.

SECRET

Another recommendation asked that Defense designate one of its offices for CIA to deal with concerning operations with military implications. This call for coordination machinery outside the Special Group procedures must have referred to operations really requiring joint planning and execution, as a major operation against Cuba would. (In a curious exchange of views the President thought that the Defense office in question should be the Joint Chiefs; Gordon Gray suggested that political aspects might involve the Secretary of Defense and ISA; and the President replied that if it was a political matter it wasn't Defense's business.) It was reported to the Board at its meeting the following spring that action was being taken on this recommendation by setting up a "cold war planning group" with representatives from OSO, the Joint Staff, and the Secretary's office.

The spring 1959 meeting, most of which was devoted to a briefing in depth designed to overcome the skepticism the Board had displayed about the effectiveness of political and psychological operations, was also told that the Special Group (now Gray-Herter-Irwin and later Gray-Murphy-Gates) had instituted regular weekly meetings and would be briefed in advance on all projects. The Board continued anxious that the Group exercise real control: at its meeting the following July it quizzed Gray and Dulles as to whether the State member gave positive advice or just went along with the DCI's proposals, whether the Defense member participated in decisions on political matters, and whether the Group as a whole was doing everything the President had expected it to do.

The third recommendation of October 1958 concerning covert action was that the DD/P organization be relieved, first, of evaluating the effectiveness of its own operations and, second, of making the estimates on which its operations would be based. The first response to this was simply to note that Richard Bissell, with whom the Board had been acquainted originally as Dulles' assistant in the specialty of advanced reconnaissance and then as agreeing to take over the DD/P research organization, the Technical Services Staff,¹¹ was now, in his capacity as the new DD/P, undertaking a major reorganization of the directorate. Progress in the reorganization as bearing on this recommendation was several times reported both to Board meetings and in writing to the NSC, but the response was not completely

¹¹ Presumably in addition to his responsibility for Aquatone. No formal action in this sense was ever taken.

SECRET

127

SECRET

The President's Board

satisfactory: Gray once complained that a DCI report addressed itself only to the first half of the double-barreled recommendation, and Kirkpatrick pointed out to Dulles that another report claimed changes which in fact were only the formalization of procedures long since practiced.

In May 1960 the Board recorded its feeling that there remained more to be done by recommending that the reorganizing of the clandestine services be continued. At the same time it recommended that chiefs of station be given higher cover rank, a matter on which talks were then begun with State.

For all its uneasiness about the covert action programs, the Board was anxious to get something going in Cuba. In January 1960 it had to be explained at some length that while general plans could be laid and assets developed, no specific project could be formulated until policy was decided at the top. And after some operations in Tibet had been described, Hull remarked that it seemed silly to make such an effort on the other side of the world when Cuba was right on our doorstep.

Demise

The agenda for the Board's last meeting, in January 1961, included consideration of the report of the Joint Study Group, the preparation of its own report to the President, and a meeting with the President. Its members all resigned, of course, with the change of administration; but it was apparently expected that the Board itself would continue in existence and new members be appointed. On 6 February Dulles sent McGeorge Bundy, Kennedy's national security assistant, a list of the former members and suggested four that it might be most desirable to reappoint (Lovett, Baker, Hull, Doolittle), along with some replacement possibilities (Sidney Souers, Frank Pace, Killian or George Kistiakowsky, Gordon Gray); and two weeks later a CIA Regulation was issued reaffirming that the IG should be the channel to the Board. It was not until May, however, after the Bay of Pigs, that the Board was reconstituted under a different name, the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board.